



Department of Justice

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**MINISTER AND WIFE CHARGED WITH HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND
IMMIGRATION VIOLATIONS FOR EXPLOITING WOMAN FROM
SWAZILAND, AFRICA**

***Defendants Allegedly Enticed Victim to Travel to the U.S. from Africa Intending to
Force the Victim to Work as Their Housekeeper and Nanny***

Atlanta, GA - JUNA GWENDOLYN BABB, 54, and MICHAEL J. BABB, 53, a minister, both of Ellenwood, Georgia, were arrested today by FBI and ICE agents following their indictment by a federal grand jury on charges of conspiracy, forced labor, document servitude, which is confiscating someone's passport and visa, and harboring an alien for financial gain. Bond was set at \$20,000 at a hearing this afternoon before United States Magistrate Judge Gerrilyn Brill. The indictment in this case, handed down last week this week by a federal grand jury in Atlanta, had been sealed until the arrests today.

In Washington, D.C., Thomas E. Perez, Assistant Attorney General for the Civil Rights Division said, "The Department is committed to prosecuting individuals who engage in schemes to exploit and compel the labor of vulnerable persons."

FBI Atlanta Special Agent in Charge Greg Jones said, "Cases such as this where lives are exploited because the individuals find themselves in circumstances without many other options is sad and tragic. When individuals create such circumstances with the sole or primary purpose of exploiting these individuals, it is simply deplorable. The FBI, along with the U.S. Department of Justice and its many law enforcement partners has made tremendous efforts to bring the growing problem of human trafficking to the public forefront and to give some measure of relief to those being exploited."

Kenneth Smith, Special Agent in Charge of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's Office of Investigations in Atlanta said, "The defendants in this case trafficked in a human being, using the victim's desire for a better life to lure her into a situation where she was deprived of her basic human rights. Many people are unaware that this form of modern day slavery still occurs in the United States. The victims can be domestic servants, sweat shop employees, day laborers or workers in the sex industry who are lured

here by the promise of prosperity and forced to work as indentured servants. ICE is committed to giving them the help they need to come forward as we work to end human trafficking with vigorous enforcement and tough penalties.”

According to Acting United States Attorney Yates, the indictment, and information in court: Between about March 2005, and continuing until on or about February 7, 2007, JUNA GWENDOLYN BABB and MICHAEL J. BABB allegedly conspired to compel the labor of the victim by enticing her to come to the United States from the Kingdom of Swaziland, Africa, by falsely promising her a lucrative, short-term opportunity to provide catering services at the wedding of a family member of the BABBs. However, upon the victim’s arrival to the United States, the couple allegedly conspired to, and did harbor her for the purpose of obtaining and maintaining her labor as a housekeeper and nanny in their home through the use of debt and threats of arrest and imprisonment.

Specifically, after the victim's arrival in the United States, the defendants confiscated her passport and return airline ticket, and told the victim that she owed them a debt for the costs of her travel to the United States. The BABBs allegedly then compelled the victim's labor by using the debt that they claimed the victim owed them, and by threatening her with arrest and imprisonment by immigration authorities once her tourist visa expired. The couple then allegedly required the victim to clean the homes of their friends and associates, and to assist with MICHAEL BABB's construction business. The indictment also alleges that the defendants required the victim to work long hours every day of the week, for which the victim was grossly underpaid on those few occasions that the BABBs paid her at all for her labor and services.

Members of the public are reminded that an indictment contains only allegations. A defendant is presumed innocent of the charges and it will be the government’s burden to prove a defendant’s guilt beyond a reasonable doubt at trial.

(NEWS MEDIA NOTE: There is a brief video statement related to this case available at <http://www.justice.gov/usao/gan/press/videoindex.html>. Broadcast video clips are available for selected news releases and can be accessed for download and use from the office website for a limited period. Generally, these video clips will be taken off the website within a few days to allow server room for new clips, so be advised to download as soon as they are available.)

This case is being investigated by Special Agents of the FBI and ICE.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Stephanie Gabay-Smith and Richard Moultrie, Jr., and Justice Department Trial Attorney Karima Maloney of the Civil Rights Division's Human Trafficking Prosecution Unit.

For further information please contact Sally Quillian Yates, Acting United States Attorney, or Charysse L. Alexander, Executive Assistant United States Attorney, through Patrick Crosby, Public Affairs Officer, U.S. Attorney's Office, at (404) 581-6016. The Internet address for the HomePage for the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Georgia is www.usdoj.gov/usao/gan.